

Police Halt Suspects, Discover an Arsenal

Torrance Press-Herald

TO CALL US

Circulation Office DA 5-1515
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INSIDE TODAY

Ann Landers C-1 Restaurants E-3
Adeline Daley B-3 Sports C-8
Editorials C-2 Women's News B-1
Obituaries A-3 Want Ads D-5

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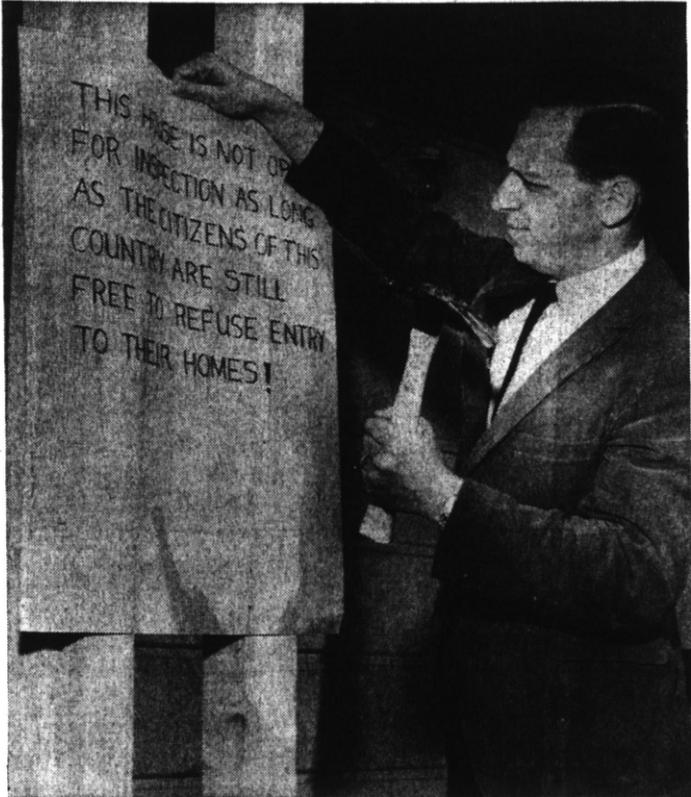
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POSTS SIGN . . . Edward Kessler, of 4710 W. 172nd St., posts an enlarged version of a sign which has been distributed throughout the adjacent neighborhood. The signs forbid city inspectors to enter the home. Kessler has been one of the chief spokesmen for residents of a triangular section in North Torrance who have opposed the city's housing inspection program. Kessler said copies of the sign have been given to all residents of the area. Most, he added, are posting the notices on their homes. Councilmen recently ruled that city inspectors would enter only those homes voluntarily opened to them. (Press-Herald Photo)

Residents Post Homes As Bar to Inspectors

Knives, Shotgun Seized

Three men were arrested here Monday evening in connection with a Redondo Beach robbery and Torrance police seized a small arsenal from the automobile in which the trio was riding.

Charles Norman Adams, 34, of 1406 W. 253rd St.; Charles Gerald Ray Hudson, 18, of 1655 W. 255th St.; and Wayne Edward Wagner, 18, of 1655 W. 255th St., all of Harbor City, were booked at the Torrance City Jail. They were charged with suspicion of robbery.

Police said a .357 magnum gun, a .45-calibre automatic, a shotgun, and two knives were found in the car, along with shells for the shotgun.

Torrance police halted the vehicle about 9:45 p.m. near Towers Street and Anza Avenue after Redondo Beach police broadcast a description of a car used in a robbery at 530 S. Pacific Coast Hwy., Redondo Beach.

Torrance police said they found a brown paper bag which contained \$68.51 in the vehicle.

Adams reportedly had been shot in the foot. He was taken to Los Angeles County General Hospital's prison ward.

Torrance Man Found Guilty In Dope Case

A 23-year-old Torrance man has been found guilty of possession of marijuana in Superior Court.

James G. Hartley, of 1503 W. 203rd St., was first charged with selling marijuana. He was found guilty of the reduced charge Monday in Department A of the Southwest Superior Court.

Judge Bernard Lawler set April 21 for probation and sentencing.

Student Paper Wins Citation

The El Camino College student newspaper, The Warhoop, has been awarded first place for general excellence by the USC School of Journalism.

Teenagers to Appear On Burglary Charges

Preliminary hearings for two 18-year-old Torrance boys accused of taking some \$1,300 from a safe at North High School have been scheduled next Monday in South Bay Municipal Court.

Everett Theodore Vogus Jr., of 3224 W. 187th St., and Ralph James Hill, of 15001 Crenshaw Blvd., were arrested near North High School last Friday afternoon.

Both youths have been ordered to appear in Division 3 of the South Bay Municipal Court at 9 a.m. Monday.



FIRE! FIRE! . . . Nurses and employes at Torrance Memorial Hospital were busy putting out fires yesterday afternoon. The fires, however, were started on purpose by Capt. George Blahnik of the Torrance Fire Department as part of a demonstration fire safety. Capt. Blahnik, shown here starting a gasoline fire, is conducting an eight-lesson course on fire safety. Mrs. Dorothy Karodsky, R.N., is shown at right as she prepares to put out the fire which Capt. Blahnik has started. (Press-Herald Photo)

IN PUEBLO AREA

City Acts to Eliminate Sewer Explosion Threat

Torrance councilmen earmarked \$2,000 in city funds last night to help finance a program which will eliminate the threat of explosions in the Pueblo community.

The city funds, along with funds to be provided by the Los Angeles County Sanitation District, will be used for the installation of gas traps in sewer lines in the Pueblo area.

Some 20 to 25 homes are involved, City Manager Edward J. Ferraro said yesterday.

THE PROGRAM is the result of investigations which followed the explosion of a home at 2115 Del Amo Blvd.

March 8. The home of Angel Acosta was virtually destroyed by the blast.

Initial investigations pointed toward natural gas, but subsequent chemical analysis has virtually eliminated that possibility, it was reported.

Ferraro said the explosion was the result of gas in a main-line industrial sewer which runs through the Pueblo area. Normal sewer gases, however, are not believed to be the cause, he said.

ALL INVESTIGATIONS to date point toward a "foreign gas" which apparently was in the sewer line, Ferraro told the council. To prevent a recurrence at the present time, the County Sanitation District has flooded the line to prevent gas build-ups.

Most of the 20 or 25 homes which are connected to the sewer were built prior to the adoption of the city's present rigid building codes and do not have gas traps in the sewer lines, he said.

MOST OF the homeowners, he added, would not be unable to afford the \$100 to \$150 cost for installing a gas trap. Yet, he said, the gas traps will "virtually guarantee" that such an explosion as the one which destroyed the Acosta home will not occur again.

Ferraro said the County Sanitation District has agreed to help pay costs associated with installing the gas traps. The city will contribute up to

Target Houses Posted

Signs telling city inspectors that the home is not open for inspectors have been posted on nearly 250 North Torrance homes as the April 1 target date for systematic housing code enforcement draws near.

Begun Monday in the area near Artesia and Hawthorne officially known as the A-12 area, the posting of signs has been done to protest the proposed inspection, triggered by the city's urban renewal program across town near the municipal airport.

Edward Kessler, 4170 W. 172nd St., said members of his residential group had found much backing throughout the community in the fight to forestall forced inspection of houses in the city.

A PETITION being circulated which would require "probable cause" warrants to be sought if homeowners refused the inspectors is receiving widespread support, Kessler said.

The signs posted by the North Torrance residents reads: "This house is not open for inspection as long as the citizens of this country are still free to refuse entry to their homes!"

"Once you start giving up your rights, there is no place to stop," Kessler told the Press-Herald Tuesday.

The forced housing inspection is a requirement of the federal government as a condition to federal participation in the Meadow Park urban renewal project at the west end of Torrance Municipal Airport. To qualify, the city must have a program of housing code enforcement as a blight prevention measure.

Trustees Endorse Bonds . . .

Members of the Torrance Board of Education voted unanimously Monday evening to endorse a \$2,350,000 municipal library bond issue which will be on the April 18 ballot. Trustees acted after George McMullen, chairman of the Library Bond Steering Committee, appeared to seek the endorsement. McMullen said the bond issue offers the city the "most economically feasible" method of financing the independent library system which is to be established here in 1968.

Board Candidates to Speak . . .

Candidates for the Torrance Board of Education in the April 18 election here have been invited to address the Torrance Republican Club Monday evening, Dr. Don Cortum, president of the group, said today. The meeting, which will be open to the public, is scheduled for 7:30 in the Torrance Recreation Center. Each candidate will be given time to make a brief statement of his platform and then the audience will be invited to question them. All seven candidates have indicated they will attend, Dr. Cortum said.

New Feature Begins Today . . .

A former Press-Herald staff member's writing returns today to the editorial page in a column entitled "A Letter to My Son." Tom Rische, former reporter for this paper, begins a column of commentary on current social problems, particularly those of teenagers. He currently is a South High journalism and sociology teacher and Hi-Y leader, as well as serving on the YMCA Board of Managers. He also has taught part-time at El Camino and is a past president of South Bay Toastmasters.

School Boundaries Approved by Board

Elementary school youngsters living in homes and apartments on the west side of Anza Avenue will have to cross the street to get to school next year.

That is the effect of a decision by the Board of Education made Monday when attendance boundaries for the new Grace Wright Elementary School were established.

The board voted unanimously to establish the western boundary of the attendance area west of Anza Avenue. Other boundaries are Del Amo, Hawthorne, and Torrance boulevards.

ACTION came at the end of a 90-minute debate in which the parents of children who will have to cross Anza Avenue presented an alternate plan which trustees said would create an intermediate school in Torrance.

Parents had asked that youngsters in kindergarten through the fourth grade be permitted to attend Victor School, which is much closer to their homes, while children in the fifth through eighth grades would attend the new Wright School.

To achieve the numerical balance needed to eliminate double sessions at Victor

School, the group suggested that an area between White Court and Del Amo Boulevard be included in the so-called "grade level attendance area."

Other members of the board echoed similar sentiments.

Dr. Kurt Shery said the plan recommended by Dr. J. H. Hull, superintendent of schools, and adopted by the board offered "the best solution at this time."

But, he added, "nothing is sacrosanct about a school boundary."

AND MRS. Watts told parents that the school board has had to "take people within sight of one school and walk them to another. We've done it before and we'll have to do it again."

The alternate plan was offered by Ted Kyte of 20707 Anza Ave. Kyte contended that trustees had been given incorrect data about the effects of the alternate plan and told trustees he had correct figures.

Parents also said they were being discriminated against because they live in apartments.

Dr. Donald Wilson told the group he felt the board would "be making a big mistake" if it set a precedent of attendance by grade levels.

IN A RELATED matter, trustees voted not to transport children to the new Sam Levy School, which can be opened April 1, in an effort to eliminate double sessions at the district's schools for the remainder of the year.

Dr. Albert Posner, assistant superintendent of schools, told the board a survey of parents show half the parents favor the plan, while the other half opposed it.

He and his wife are parents of two daughters.



PAUL M. NOWATKA Gets Stripes

New Police Sergeant Appointed

Torrance police officer, Paul M. Nowatka has been promoted to the rank of sergeant, Chief of Police Walter R. Koenig has announced.

Sgt. Nowatka was born in Buffalo, N.Y., and moved to Westchester with his family when he was 8 years old. He is a graduate of Westchester High School.

A veteran of the U.S. Army, he served as a military policeman. He entered police service in 1961 and has been assigned to the patrol division and the traffic division.

He and his wife are parents of two daughters.

Guilty Plea Entered in Theft Case

A 18-year-old Torrance youth arrested on suspicion of robbery has pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of attempted grand theft in Superior Court.

Daniel Raymond Siacotos, of 21005 Donora St., entered the guilty plea yesterday in Department A of the Southwest Superior Court.

Siacotos has been ordered to appear in court April 28 for probation and sentencing.